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INFORMATION REPORT

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studying the ownership status of the Pinkafeld-Szombathely railroad in Burgenland, particularly that part of the line between Pinkafeld and Wiener-Neustadt, Lower Austria. This was formerly a privately owned railroad line but, during the Nazi regime, the Austrian portion of the railroad was purchased by the German Reichsbahn for 450,000 Reichsmarks and is now considered 100 percent German property by the Soviets. WANER is also studying the ownership status of the right-of-way along the Vienna-Pottendorf-Wiener Neustadt railroad, which was purchased by the German Reichsbahn in 1939 for 450,000 Reichsmarks. This railroad was originally constructed to relieve the heavy traffic load carried on the main southern route to Italy.

2. On 2 March 1949, Lt. Col. BORISOV of the Soviet Reparations Division in the Hotel Imperial sent the German Properties Department a list of four firms: Oesterreichische Brown-Boveri Werke A.G.; C. Schember & Soehne, Brueckenwaagen und Maschinenfabriken A.G. in Atzgersdorf; Semperit Gummiwerke A.G. in Wimpassing; and Steyermuehl Papierfabriks und Verlags A.G., Vienna I, Boerse-gasse 11. BORISOV's directive requested that two questions be answered about each firm. These questions covered details as to the firms' shareholders in 1945 and the standpoint of the Austrian Government on the Austrian ownership status of each firm. According to source, the German Properties Department has never before been asked to determine the position taken by the Austrian Government on the status of Austrian ownership. During the second week of March 1949, a new set of inquiries regarding Semperit Gummiwerke A.G., Steyermuehl Papierfabriks und Verlags A.G., and Steyr-Daimler-Puch A.G., were sent to the German Properties Department by the Legal and Financial Departments of USIA. The inquiry from the Legal Department

Warenfabrik A.G., is also being investigated by the German Properties Department. Source regards these investigations as indicative of Soviet intention to establish future claims to German property on a justifiable legal basis.

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is progressing slowly. The fact that OLEKH, head of the German Properties Department, attends daily conferences at the Imperial Hotel and takes with him a number of case files and compilations made by the Soviet staff of the department, and that the Financial Department of USIA has made an unusual number of inquiries recently regarding the capital status of firms under investigation by the German Properties Department has led source to believe that Soviet authorities are working on some form of overall statement concerning German property claims.

5. A special Soviet commission has been appointed to check the files of all firms declared 100 percent Austrian-owned by the German Properties Department since 1945 to make sure that no errors have been made and that no further claims can be found. According to OLEKH, the findings of this commission will be forwarded to the Soviet delegate to the Austrian state treaty conferences in London.

as being 42 percent German-owned. The amount of Semperit indebtedness to the Creditanstalt is not known.

~~Further information cannot be identified in avail-~~

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